

EXEMPTION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FROM TAXES.

OBSERVING in your able periodical of last week a paragraph relative to the exemption of literary and educational institutions from the payment of rates, permit me to draw attention to the want of equity, under the present Act, in saddling a particular parish with the entire loss of rate. In a country town, for instance, with some dozen parishes, why should the parish in which a museum or mechanics' institute happens to be located be alone taxed by the loss of a rate on a large property, and the other eleven, which derive equal benefit from the institutions, be exempted?

Could not this injustice be obviated by directing the treasurer of the union to CREDIT the individual parish in which an institution might be situated with the amount of rate which would, but for the special exemption, be due to it, and DEBIT the union account with the same sum? I believe some such arrangement as that suggested would obviate much of the objection and opposition with which the working of the Act has been impeded.

Of course this is only suggested in the absence of a "national poor rate,"—the only effectual remedy for this and many other more important and equally inequitable anomalies.

T. S. G.

LIVERPOOL ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE annual excursion of this society took place on Saturday, the 16th inst. The locality fixed upon was the village of Gresford, in Denbighshire, famed for its beautiful church and the picturesque scenery in its neighbourhood. The party from Liverpool was joined at Chester by a deputation from the Chester Archaeological Society. On their arrival at Gresford they were conducted over the church by the reverend vicar. The church is a fine specimen of late Perpendicular work, the tower being particularly rich in panelling and niched and canopied buttresses, the statues, for the most part, still remaining. After staying a sufficient time at Gresford, to sketch the most interesting portions, and to delineate the details, the party proceeded to Wrexham, and made an inspection of the church there, which is generally considered the pride of North Wales, after which they sat down to an excellent dinner at the Wynnstay Arms Inn. Covers were laid for forty. The chair was occupied by Mr. J. A. Picton, F.S.A., vice-president of the Liverpool Society; the vice-chair was taken by Mr. C. Reed, the secretary, and the meeting was addressed by them, by the Rev. Mr. Massie, rector of St. Mary's, Chester, Mr. John Hicklin, secretary to the Chester Society, and editor of the *Chester Courier*, Mr. R. Alexander, editor of the *Liverpool Mail*, and other gentlemen.

ARCHED TRUSSES OF BENT TIMBER.

I OBSERVE in your Saturday's number a report of a description of the construction of a collar roof, with arched trusses of bent timber, at East Horsey Park, read by the Earl of Lovelace.

I have never heard of, or seen Col. Emy's work on Carpentry, but the idea of bending the timber in laminæ occurred to me in the beginning of 1843, when plans were wanted for temporary churches for the clergy that left the Established Church of Scotland, a model of which I had prepared and deposited in the studio of Handyside Ritchie, the sculptor, which was examined and highly approved of by a great many scientific gentlemen in Edinburgh. Since that time I have designed and carried out several churches in the pointed style, with the ribs of the trusses bent, and I have at this moment six churches in hand erecting on the same principle as regards the roof, in different parts of the kingdom. Independent of the beauty of appearance and unquestionable strength gained by such a mode of construction, the great economy is, perhaps, the most striking.

About twelve months ago I was called upon to prepare a design for re-roofing a church in Cheshire, 48 feet wide, built in a sort of bastard Norman style, and I adopted the semi-

circle, as more in keeping with the rest of the work, the inner angles of each rib moulded with a notched billet. Another architect prepared a design, consisting of the common tie beam and king post, and both were estimated by the same tradesman; for the former his tender was £201., for the latter £301., showing a difference of £101. in favour of this system of construction.

In no case have I had the slightest accident or giving way of the work.

The notice in *THE BUILDER* is the first intimation of this principle being applied by any one but myself to the purposes of roofing, and in a new edition of Nicholson's *Carpenters' Guide*, now publishing by Virtue, of Ivy-lane, under my revision, I intend to embody this mode of roofing in the work, illustrated by drawings and details.

Liverpool.

JOHN HAY.

NINEVEH.

SYRO-EGYPTIAN SOCIETY.

At a meeting of this society, on the 12th. Mr. Ainsworth, the secretary, read a communication "on the topography of Nineveh." After pointing out the received distinctions of Assyria proper and of the Assyrian empire, the writer proceeded to argue, that whichever of the disputed versions of Genesis x., 11, is adopted, it still remains certain that there was an Assur, or Athur, existing before the foundation of Nineveh. That the Arabian geographers Yakut, Abulfeda, and Ibn Said describe the ruins as the modern Nimrud, as those of the said Asshur, or Athur (sometimes Akur, with a kaf). That Mr. Rich, in his "Kurdistan" (vol. ii., p. 129), the Rev. N. Morren, in art. Assyria ("Cyclop. of Bib."), and Dr. Layard, in his "Nineveh, &c." vol. ii. p. 245, admit that all well-informed natives designate Nimrud as Al Asshur, or Athur. That the name which occurs in the inscriptions found in the north-west edifice at Nimrud has been read by Major Rawlinson as that of the Asshur of Genesis, and that Dr. Hincks has also published his conviction that the first word of the inscription is either the name, or an abbreviation of the name of Athur; but the Doctor also adds, which is a non sequitur, that the same name stands for the city, of which the historical name is Nineveh.

That Dr. Layard's archaeological investigations have already shown that the builder of the central palace—the second in succession of time—at Nimrud, also erected edifices, if he did not found the sites of what are now called 'Ba'asbeikha and Kalah Skirgat; that Dr. Layard also admits that the more modern Assyrian ruins at Koyunjik, Khorsabad, and Karamles, represent the Nineveh of the Books of Jonah and Nahum, and of profane history and of travellers. But Dr. Layard also comprises within the same denomination, a palace of the same age that was erected upon the ruins of Asshur.

Mr. Ainsworth showed, upon a map of Assyria on a large scale, which he had drawn up, that no arbitrary grouping of the Assyrian ruins would be satisfactory at the present moment, and that in the present state of the inquiry there are no other data than that Nimrod or Ninus, or his or their successors, erected and continued to erect edifices at Athur, one of the oldest cities of Assyria proper, and that the second dynasty also erected edifices at the same spot after its fall and the rise of the historical Nineveh, to identify the one with the other; but that the greater number of probabilities, at least topographically speaking, are that the two sites were always distinct, and that Athur or Nimrud was a separate site from the abode of Ninus, as well as from the historical Nineveh.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, WARR, will be reopened for service on Thursday, July 5, and a sermon will be preached to aid the restoration fund, by the Rev. Henry Melville. The restorations here, which commenced with the outside, have been carried out very extensively inside, through the zeal of the vicar and parish officers and the liberality of the inhabitants. Although personally concerned, we shall be tempted to give hereafter some little description of the alterations effected.

Books.

The Architectural Scrap Book, containing sketches of parts of buildings, English and Continental. By J. BUTLER and H. HODGE, architects, Beaufort-buildings.

THE north aisle of Hallaton Church; Churchyard Cross, Houghton; Turrets from Boulogne and Oxford, and two Elizabethan doorways, constitute No. 3 of this work, and in No. 4 are brick chimneys, at Assington and Terling, an oriel window from Colmar, France; and two wooden porches, from Trowlesworth Church, Leicestershire, and Heston Church, Middlesex. The last number is an improvement on those which precede. The oriel window from Colmar, belonging to the seventeenth century, is a curious renaissance version of the angle turrets to dwellings of the mediæval period abroad. "The plan of the window is a parallelogram, placed on the angle-house of a street, offering facilities for seeing up and down four streets; it looks remarkably picturesque and new."

Touching our remark on a previous occasion that "the idea of the 'Architectural Scrap Book' would almost seem to have been taken from the announced intention of the Architectural Publication Society," the authors have written us to say that "whatever might be inferred from appearances, the prospectus of the work was written and printed many months before they were aware of the Publication Society's existence, and that they have too much respect for the praiseworthy efforts of the society to interfere with their work or intentions."

Antiquarian Gleanings in the North of England. Drawn and Etched by W. B. SCOTT, of the Newcastle School of Design. No. 1. Bell, Fleet-street.

THIS is the commencement of a laudable attempt by Mr. Scott to preserve records of the moveable antiquities of "the North-Humbrian province." It includes the carved reading-desk in Jarrow Church, various cinque-cento cups, a carved chimney-piece in the Guildhall, Newcastle, chairs, and wall paintings.

The History of Ireland, from the earliest period of the Irish Annals to the present Time. By THOMAS WRIGHT, M.A., &c. London: Tait. Nos. 10 to 12.

MR. WRIGHT is advancing with his history, the last number (12) bringing us to the year 1601. It seems to be carefully written, and is well calculated to supply an existing deficiency.

Miscellaneous.

JOHN KNOX'S HOUSE AT EDINBURGH.—The old house in the Netherbow, in which the stern old Calvinist lived and died, is now so dilapidated that the dean of Guild-court has ordered its removal, notwithstanding an endeavour of Mr. R. Chambers and other members of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries to prevent it. Some time ago it was proposed to erect on this spot a monument to the memory of Knox, to consist of a tower and two churches. It is to be hoped that nothing worthy of preservation in this ancient edifice will be destroyed.

A FORTHCOMING PANORAMA.—Mr. Henry Warren, Mr. Haghe, Mr. Bonomi, and other good men and true, are engaged on a panorama of the Nile, of very considerable extent, and will soon bring their labours to a close. The novelty of the subject, and the goodness of the authorities consulted, can scarcely fail to obtain for it a large amount of popularity, if the idea be carried out as efficiently as the names above-mentioned give us reason to believe it will be.

A NEW STREET WATERER has been patented by Mr. Salter, of Birkenhead. The tank is of cast-iron, mounted on cast wheels, which in rotating work a force pump, projecting the water into an air chamber, and thence in a steady stream into pierced pipes as usual. A breadth of 30 feet, or only one-half, can thus be effectually watered, or the force pump thrown altogether out of gear, by treadles at the driver's feet and handles at his side. The cost of the forcing apparatus is 15 guineas, and of the whole 45 guineas. The machine, it is said, can do the work of three ordinary water carts.